



# State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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December 19, 2001

TO: Internal File

THRU: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor  
Pamela Grubaugh-Littig, Permit Supervisor

FROM: Priscilla Burton, Sr. Reclamation Specialist/Soils  
Dana Dean, Reclamation Specialist  
ML for SD Steve Demczak, Sr. Reclamation Specialist/Engineering  
MS Mike Suflita, Sr. Reclamation Specialist/Hydrology  
WHW Wayne Western, Sr. Reclamation Specialist/Engineering  
SMW Susan White, Sr. Reclamation Specialist/Biology

RE: Technical Field Visit, Link Canyon Escape way/Power Portal Development,  
Canyon Fuel Company, LLC., SUFCO Mine, C/041/002

## Other Attendees:

U.S. Forest Service, Manti La Sal Region: Catherine Woodfield, Physical Scientist  
Karl Boyer, Ground Water Hydrologist  
Dale Harbor, Geologist  
Cara Staab, Biologist (Ferron District Office)

Utah Division of Wildlife: Chris Colt, Biologist

SUFCO: Chris Hansen, Environmental Coordinator, Canyon Fuel Co.  
Mike Davis, Environmental Engineer, SUFCO Mine  
Wes Sorenson, Mining Engineer, SUFCO MINE

Date & Time: December 6, 2001, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm, clear skies, six inches of snow  
on the ground.

TECHNICAL FIELD VISIT

**PURPOSE:**

To discuss mine plans for re-opening the Link Canyon portals for use as an escape-way and to supply power to the mine. Existing escape-ways require miners in the associated part of the mine to walk out four miles in an emergency. Also, resetting the power transformers in Link Canyon takes over an hour coming up the existing road. Thus, mine safety will be greatly improved and maintenance time will be reduced.

**OBSERVATIONS:**

Wes Sorenson briefed the assembled group on the plans for development, including the creation of a short access road, operations pad and two power poles at the site. Required acreage is still being estimated, but is believed to be about 0.25 to 0.33 acre. Height of the disturbance was estimated to reach a fallen log above the first portal (see image P0003277).

The Link Canyon Mine is a pre-law mine abandoned in the 1950's. The current SUFCO mine does not connect to the old Link Canyon Mine workings. The Permittee wants to develop the site for utility access and escape way.

The site is in a box canyon. The access road will cross an ephemeral drainage at the head of the canyon. The two portals both drain water (approximately 3 gpm each) and below each is a well-developed riparian area. In fact, a frozen waterfall was noted downstream of the site.

Soils were very sandy. Mr. Hansen indicated that a soil scientist had been contracted to conduct a soil survey in the area before the end of the month. Mr. Sorenson indicated that topsoil storage would be alongside the ephemeral drainage. The possibility of storing the topsoil pile at the existing substation was proffered. Treatment of the topsoil pile with transplants of *Mahonia* from the access road was also suggested for rapid stabilization of the pile.

Two power poles would carry power from the substation in Link Canyon to the mine portal. One pole would be placed alongside the existing road and one on the operations pad at the portal. Mr. Sorenson asserted that the installation of the power poles would create very little disturbance.

The old Link Canyon Mine will need to be drained and ventilated, from the outside in Link Canyon, when developing the escape way. Concern was expressed about draining the current mine water to an existing UPDES point at the main mine sediment pond. This would be only to drain the accumulated water in the old mine. The Operator stated that they would look into damming the old workings and shunting all discharge to the ~~southern~~ <sup>eastern</sup> most portal. This continuing discharge would be done with a small (5 gpm) pump and associated pipe that discharges out the ~~south~~ <sup>east</sup> portal. Such an arrangement would sustain the riparian area at the ~~south~~ <sup>east</sup> portal and in Link Canyon.

document revised  
12/21/01 by MJS  
after call to  
Wes Sorenson  
to confirm.

The group discussed reclamation and restoring the mine water discharge after mining operations have concluded. Perennial water flow to the Canyon is an important resource to the flora and fauna of Link Canyon. It's interesting to note that the current water that flows into Link Canyon is a result of the old Link Canyon Mine. As explained at the field visit, these flows were not naturally flowing in the canyon prior to that mine being closed.

Baseline flow data from the portals will be needed to predict the potential for reclamation. Chris Hansen indicated he would search for old records, if available. He also committed to do complete baseline sampling this quarter and first quarter of 2002 of the stream issuing from the north portal. It was noted that Link Canyon Spring is located about 1,000 feet up the drainage and may be contributing to the water flows in the old mine.

The canyon was determined by Division, DWR, and Forest Service biologists to meet Mexican Spotted Owl habitat requirements. Likely a survey will be required if construction activities occur between mid February and late August. The Forest and/or the Division will need to do Section 7 consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service for this site development.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSIONS:**

The Division appreciates the opportunity to comment in advance on the information to be forthcoming in an amendment covering the Link Canyon Mine Portal Project. Images of the site are located in: <ftp://dogm.nr.state.ut.us/PUB/MINES/Coal/C041/002/Images/12062001>.

cc: All Attendees  
Price Field Office  
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